

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

UNCLAS CANBERRA 7656

BANGKOK FOR FADPC; USDAO FOR FAS

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: AFSSO, AS

SUBJ: LOCAL COMPENSATION PLAN - AUSTRALIA

1. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (CPI) FOR THE SEPTEMBER QUARTER INCREASED BY 2.2 PERCENT. IN TERMS OF AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS WHICH STOOD AT A DOLS 180.30 AT THE END OF JUNE, THE NATIONAL RISE WAS EQUIVALENT TO SLIGHTLY LESS THAN A DOLS 4.00. IN TERMS OF THE AVERAGE ADULT MALE WEEKLY AWARD RATE WHICH STOOD AT A DOLS 119.63 AT THE END OF JUNE, THE RISE WAS EQUIVALENT TO A DOLS 2.63.

2. THE CANBERRA TIMES ECONOMICS WRITER STATES: "THE INDEX IS REFLECTING A DISTINCT EASING IN THE RATE OF INCREASE OF RETAIL PRICES IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT ON BOTH A QUARTERLY AND ANNUAL BASIS THIS SEPTEMBER QUARTER'S MOVEMENTS WERE HIGHER THAN THOSE FOR LAST YEAR, AND THE 13.9 PERCENT MOVEMENT FOR THE FOUR QUARTERS WAS HIGHER THAN THE 12.3 PERCENT FIGURE AT THE END OF THE JUNE QUARTER."

3. THE CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION COMMISSION WILL BEGIN THE NEXT NATIONAL WAGE HEARINGS EARLY NEXT MONTH. ACCORDING TO REPORTS, THE UNIONS WILL BE ASKING FOR A RESTORATION OF

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PAGE 02 CANBER 07656 220215Z

WAGES LOST AS RESULT OF ABANDONMENT OF FULL WAGE INDEX-

ATION IN PAST HEARINGS PLUS THE INCREASE REGISTERED IN THE CIP IN THE SEPTEMBER QUARTER, A CLAIM OF SOMETHING LIKE 7 PERCENT. THE GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRALIAN AND THE EMPLOYERS WILL OPPOSE IT AN AN AWARD OF ANYTHING LESS MIGHT BE EXPECTED TO TRIGGER A RASH OF CLAIMS OUTSIDE THE GUIDELINES LAID DOWN BY THE COMMISSION EARLY LAST YEAR. THE COMMISSION HAS CONSISTENTLY EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT SUFFICIENT TRESPASSING OUTSIDE THE GUIDELINESALREADY HAS OCCURRED TO JEOPARADIZE THE CONTINUATION OF QUARTERLY WAGE INDEXATION IN AUSTRALIA.

4. THE EMBASSY WILL ADVISE THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARBITRATION COMMISSION'S DECISION WHEN IT IS HANDED DOWN.
HARGROVE

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